

in the southern part of the city and took the chapel and set it aside for visitors to come pay their respects. The Presiding Officer wouldn't believe the lines that went on for blocks, men and women in uniform and everybody else—myself, my wife, folks in the city—paying their respects to Ella French. She was an extraordinary person.

The gun that killed her was a straw purchase gun. What does that mean? Somebody went into a Federal gun dealer and said: I want to buy a gun. They looked and checked, and that person had no criminal record. The person bought the gun, turned around, went outside, and handed it to a convicted felon, who then turned around and killed this policewoman. That is a straw purchase.

Unfortunately, for too long, we have treated that as a bookkeeping crime, a misdemeanor, nothing serious. It is serious. Straw purchases are a way to avoid the prohibition under the law of a person with a criminal record buying a gun. We ought to treat it as a serious matter.

I have appealed to all the U.S. attorneys in my State, and I hope all Senators will talk to the U.S. attorneys across the Nation. Take straw purchasing seriously. This is not a bookkeeping error; this is a deadly crime that can kill innocent, good people like Ella French and maimed the officer who was with her. So we ought to take that seriously.

This weekend that I just referred to, the previous one, with 37 shootings, 1 of them was on Sunday night. Madam President, they went to the scene afterwards and found 68 cartridges—68. The people in the neighborhood said it sounded like a war zone. Two of the cartridges were from an AK-47, a military assault type rifle, which has no place anywhere except in the military or maybe some police application, but in this case, it was being used in a shootout between two people in cars.

I don't understand what happened next. They ended up finding one of the people who were involved in the shooting. He had a gun. He had a gun illegally. He doesn't have a firearm identification card, required under Illinois law. After taking a look at the facts of the situation, they plan on charging him with a misdemeanor. What is going on here? A misdemeanor for a shootout on the streets of Chicago with 68 cartridges on the ground afterwards?

Whether it is a straw purchase treated as a bookkeeping error or a shootout with an AK-47 treated as a misdemeanor, we have to send the word out that this is unacceptable—not just in Chicago but unacceptable across this country.

If you want to legally own a gun, store it properly, use it properly and legally, I am all for it, and I think that is what the Second Amendment is all about. But what is going on on streets of Chicago, the streets of East St. Louis, Rockford, and so many other

cities is a shootout with a massive amount of guns that are finding their way onto the streets. So we have to take that seriously.

#### CONFIRMATION OF LADON A. REYNOLDS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, let me just close by saying that last week, the Senate did a great job filling another critical law enforcement vacancy in Chicago. We confirmed Oak Park Police Chief LaDon Reynolds to be our Northern District's next U.S. marshal. That seat has been vacant for almost 4 years. It is a critical position for reducing crime, apprehending fugitives, and protecting our judges.

Marshal Reynolds is the man for the job. Breaking the cycle of violence in Chicago and across America requires the best. All of us need to pull together: families, schools, community organizations, law enforcement, the public health community, faith leaders, the business community, and more. I am glad that the HEAL Initiative is a start in that direction. We have more work to do, and we cannot allow any petty Washington politics to get in the way.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Joshua Frost, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, there has been a lot of noise about canceling student debt. That has been going on for quite a few months, but it seems to have taken on a new life here within the last week to 10 days. That whole talk is worse than closing the barn door after the horse has escaped; it is like buying a new horse but leaving the barn door open. If all student

debt was gone tomorrow, we would be right back where we started when this whole new crop of students graduate.

Last month, the administration unilaterally extended all the pause on paying back student loans for all borrowers until the end of August, regardless of need. It doesn't matter that all Americans are back to work now, if they want to be back to work. It doesn't matter if the borrower is making six figures and can afford to pay off their loans.

The latest extension will bring the cost of this student loan payment pause up to about \$150 billion. Just to put that \$150 billion in context, the entire Department of Education budget for this year is about half of that amount at \$80 billion.

Higher education advocates have been calling for the doubling of the Pell grant. That is the program that targets aid to those with the most financial need. It is a noble goal to double the Pell grant; but, of course, Congress needs to find the money somewhere to do just that.

Now, instead, the Biden administration is spending billions of dollars to allow high earners with graduate degrees to not pay their loans with no say from the Congress of the United States. And you know the President of the United States has been debating for months—maybe starting at the beginning of his term—did he really have the authority to do it. He has expressed the opinion, at least on the \$50,000 figure, that he didn't figure he had the authority to do it. I question whether he has that authority at all.

If you want to help those who owe more in student loans than they can afford to pay, we need to fix the student loan program on the front end. In other words, we need to change the incentives and give colleges a reason to bring down tuition. Right now, a high school student looking at college is often in the dark about what they will end up paying to attend college and to get that degree. It is no wonder that prices rise when students don't know even what those prices are. And students are encouraged, of course, to borrow the maximum even if they don't need that maximum, because that is what the Federal law requires.

So in response to this problem about a Federal policy encouraging students to go into more debt than they need to get their degree and also about the rising tuition costs because colleges think they can raise their tuition at will because the Federal Government is going to come in and help the student, I have introduced three bipartisan bills to give students the information they need to make the choice that works best for them. My bills would make it easier for students to see how much each college would cost, what aid they are going to be getting, and what their average salary versus student loan payments would be. The answer isn't to cancel student debt only after students have gotten in well over their heads, it